

**NEWS RELEASE
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**GOVERNOR'S AG CONFERENCE REGISTRATION DEADLINE NEARS
*FINAL SPEAKER ANNOUNCED***

(LINCOLN) – Nebraska Department of Agriculture (NDA) Director Greg Ibach is reminding farmers, ranchers and agribusiness professionals about the upcoming registration deadline for the 26th Annual Governor's Ag Conference.

The Conference, scheduled for March 5-6, will be held at the Holiday Inn and Convention Center in Kearney. Early registration for the Conference ends February 19.

"The Governor's Ag Conference is a time for those in the agricultural community to join together and look towards the future of our industry," said Ibach. "We have an exciting line up of speakers this year that will address topics of interest for all that attend."

Joining the current lineup of speakers will be Matthew Bechdol, the president of GeoSilos, a company that leverages location analytics to help agriculturalists analyze and utilize data collected through modern agriculture technology. Bechdol will discuss the benefits of such technology, as well as the potential privacy concerns associated with it.

"Farmers and ranchers now have access to technological tools that help them be more prescriptive in addressing challenges within their farm fields, their animals," Bechdol said. "While this technology is extremely beneficial, it has created public policy issues that need to be addressed. Who owns the data? How can that data be used? These are critical questions as modern agriculture becomes more technologically driven."

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Other speakers at this year's Conference will include: Randy Krotz, with the U.S. Farmers and Ranchers Alliance (USFRA), will kick off the conference with a discussion about strategies to engage and educate consumers in meaningful conversations about agriculture; Dr. Charles Hibberd with the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension will provide an update on the new Nebraska Agriculture Experience that will debut at the 2014 Nebraska State Fair; Kay Johnson Smith with the Animal Agriculture Alliance, will discuss current issues related to animal welfare and livestock production; Dr. Ronnie Green of the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln will discuss the results of University lead analysis that looks at the economic advantages of responsible livestock growth in Nebraska and policy considerations associated with such growth; and Todd Becker of Green Plains Renewable Energy will share his insights on current and future policy considerations for the biofuels sector.

The Conference is open to anyone interested in learning more about the issues facing Nebraska agriculture. A \$100 registration fee covers participation at the entire Conference. More information, including the schedule and online registration is available at www.nda.nebraska.gov. Those interested in attending can register by calling NDA toll-free at (800) 831-0550 or by going online at www.nda.nebraska.gov.

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***MEMBERS OF THE MEDIA** are invited to attend the Conference. To make arrangements, please contact Christin Kamm at (402) 471-6856 or e-mail christin.kamm@nebraska.gov. A media box will be available on March 6. In addition, all speakers will be asked to meet with the media following their presentation. The media room will be located in Stateroom D.